



## Sierra County Health and Human Services

### Social Services

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Vickie Clark- Director

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## DECLARATION OF LOCAL HEALTH EMERGENCY

(Health & Safety Code §101080)

*WHEREAS*, a novel coronavirus, COVID-19, causes infectious disease and was first detected in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China in December 2019. Symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, cough, and shortness of breath; outcomes have ranged from mild to severe illness, and in some cases death.

*WHEREAS*, Chinese health officials have reported tens of thousands of cases of COVID-19 in China, with the virus reportedly spreading from person-to-person. COVID-19 illnesses, most of them associated with travel from Wuhan, are also being reported in a growing number of international locations, including the United States.

*WHEREAS*, the number of reported cases of COVID-19 has escalated dramatically over a short period of time, and on January 30, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the outbreak a "public health emergency of international concern" followed by a declaration on March 11, 2020, characterizing the outbreak as a "pandemic."

*WHEREAS*, WHO officials now report that sustained human-to-human transmission of the virus is occurring. Transmission from asymptomatic individuals has been documented. Suspected community transmission of the virus is occurring in the United States. Although the majority of individuals infected with COVID-19 recover from the disease without special treatment, there is significant potential for serious infection and death.

*WHEREAS*, on January 31, 2020, United States Health and Human Service Secretary Alex M. Azar II declared a public health emergency for the United States to aid the nation's healthcare community in responding to COVID-19.

*WHEREAS*, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has determined that the virus presents a serious public health threat.

*WHEREAS*, on February 2, 2020, the federal government initiated the suspension of the entry of foreign nationals who were in China within the past fourteen (14) days. United States citizens, residents, and their immediate family members who were in the Hubei Province and other parts of mainland China are screened upon their entry into the United States. Those without symptoms traveling from areas of China (other than Hubei Province) are allowed to continue to their final destination, but are requested to self-quarantine in coordination with local public health officials for up to fourteen (14) days.

*WHEREAS*, on February 27, 2020, the CDC issued new guidelines to screen individuals suffering from a fever and/or signs/symptoms of lower respiratory illness (e.g. cough or shortness of breath) for COVID-19 for a history of travel from China, Iran, Italy, Japan, and South Korea as well as patients suffering from a fever with severe acute lower respiratory illness (e.g., pneumonia, ARDS) requiring hospitalization and without alternative explanatory diagnosis (e.g., influenza).

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, the President of the United States declared a national emergency to respond to COVID-19.

WHEREAS, on March 20, 2020, there are nine confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Placer County, one case in Nevada County, and 14 cases in Washoe County.

WHEREAS, there will be more confirmed cases in California from non-travel, community transmission due to the increase of these cases in the country, combined with the worldwide uncontrolled spread of COVID-19.

WHEREAS, approximately 35% of Sierra County's population is age 65 years or over, and older adults and individuals with underlying health conditions are particularly vulnerable to COVID-19.

WHEREAS, Sierra County Public Health is now using its continuity of operations plan to ensure that essential functions of the Public Health Agency continue while certain staff are reassigned to this emergency response.

WHEREAS, the local emergency response is focusing on ensuring the health and safety of those most at risk of complications from COVID-19 disease.


WHEREAS, Health & Safety Code section 101080 allows a local health officer to declare a local health emergency in the health officer's jurisdiction, or any part thereof, whenever the health officer reasonably determines that there is an imminent and proximate threat of the introduction of any contagious, infectious, or communicable disease.

WHEREAS, this declaration enables the County to more effectively respond to the outbreak, seek and utilize mutual aid, potentially obtain reimbursement, and ensure that the County's public health professionals and providers have all necessary personal protective equipment to provide quality care and keep our community safe.

Now, therefore, pursuant to Health & Safety Code section 101080, the Sierra County Health Officer declares:

- 1) The potential introduction of COVID-19 in Sierra County is a threat to the public health within the meaning of Health & Safety Code section 101080.
- 2) A local health emergency is declared in Sierra County commencing on or about 2:00 p.m. of the 20th day of March, 2020.
- 3) This Declaration shall remain in effect until terminated by the Sierra County Public Health Officer.

Date: March 20, 2020

  
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Celia Sutton-Pado, MD  
Public Health Officer  
Sierra County